

Serial No. 09/978,516

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Claim 1 (currently amended). A nail-driving tool comprising:

a cylinder comprising a chamber defined by an inner peripheral wall and an end wall, the end wall including a through-hole, the inner peripheral wall including plural ports communicated with outside;

a piston reciprocatingly received in the chamber of the cylinder;

a driving element securely attached to the piston to move therewith, the driving element extending through the through-hole of the end wall;

a bumper received in the chamber and located between the piston and the end wall, the driving element extending through the bumper, with the bumper including a first bumper section having an outer periphery; and

an annular gap extending completely around the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder and between the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder and the outer periphery of the first bumper section a portion of the bumper, with the annular gap having an axial extent along the driving element, with the outer periphery of the first bumper section not being in contact with the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder and located around the driving element, with the plural ports located within the axial extent of the annular gap, with the annular gap being in communication with the plural ports,

the annular gap allowing exit of the air in the chamber via the plural ports of the cylinder and allowing entrance of ambient air into the chamber of the cylinder via the plural ports of the cylinder located within the axial extent of the annular gap.

Claim 2 (currently amended). The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 1, wherein the bumper includes an enlarged end section that abuts against the end wall, with the enlarged end section being of a larger cross sectional size than the portion outer periphery of the first bumper section of the bumper not in contact with the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder, with the nail-driving tool further comprising an annular connecting wall being defined between the end wall and the inner peripheral wall, the enlarged end section of the bumper being securely received in a space defined by the annular connecting wall.

Claim 3 (currently amended). The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 2, wherein the annular connecting wall has a cross-sectional size larger than that of the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder, thereby defining the annular gap between the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder

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and the portion outer periphery of the first bumper section of the bumper not in contact with the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder.

Claim 4 (originally filed). The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 1, further comprising means for driving the piston, said piston-driving means being one of pressurized air and inflammable gas.

Claim 5 (previously amended). The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a head, with the cylinder mounted in the head, wherein the head comprises plural ports in an end thereof to allow communication between the chamber of the cylinder and outside.

Claim 6 (cancelled).

Claim 7 (currently amended). The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 3, with the bumper further comprising a first bumper section and a second bumper section, wherein the first bumper section is more rigid than the second bumper section, the second bumper section including the enlarged end section that abuts against the end wall, the enlarged end section of the second bumper section having a cross sectional size larger than that of the annular gap.

Claim 8 (cancelled).

Claim 9 (previously amended). The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 3, further comprising means for driving the piston, said piston-driving means being one of pressurized air and inflammable gas.

Claim 10 (previously amended). The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 3, further comprising:

a head, with the cylinder mounted in the head, wherein the head comprises plural ports in an end thereof to allow communication between the chamber of the cylinder and outside.

Claim 11 (previously amended). The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 7, wherein the annular gap is defined between the second bumper section and the inner peripheral wall of the cylinder.

Claim 12 (cancelled).

Claim 13 (originally filed). The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 11, further comprising means for driving the piston, said piston-driving means being one of pressurized air and inflammable gas.

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Claim 14 (previously amended). The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 11, further comprising:

a head, with the cylinder mounted in the head, wherein the head comprises plural ports in an end thereof to allow communication between the chamber of the cylinder and outside.

Claim 15 (currently amended), The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

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a head, with the cylinder mounted in the head, with the bumper further comprising a ~~first bumper section and~~ a second bumper section made of a material having a rigidity different from that of the first bumper section.

Claim 16 (currently amended). The nail-driving tool as claimed in claim 1, with the bumper further comprising ~~a first bumper section and~~ a second bumper section made of a material having a rigidity different from that of the first bumper section, with the driving element extending through the first bumper section and the second bumper section, with the second bumper section including a first portion of a cross sectional size perpendicular to the driving element, with the second bumper section including an enlarged end section extending from the first portion and of a cross sectional size perpendicular to the driving element larger than the cross sectional size of the first portion, with a cross sectional shape of the second bumper section parallel to the driving element being in the form of a T.